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*Hikers, Beware!—A thick growth of poison ivy (foreground) along a forest patch provides an ideal 'class-room' for a lesson in poison ivy identification delivered by a teacher to her students during a spring nature study excursion. N-57282*

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# 3 LEAVES MEAN POISON IVY

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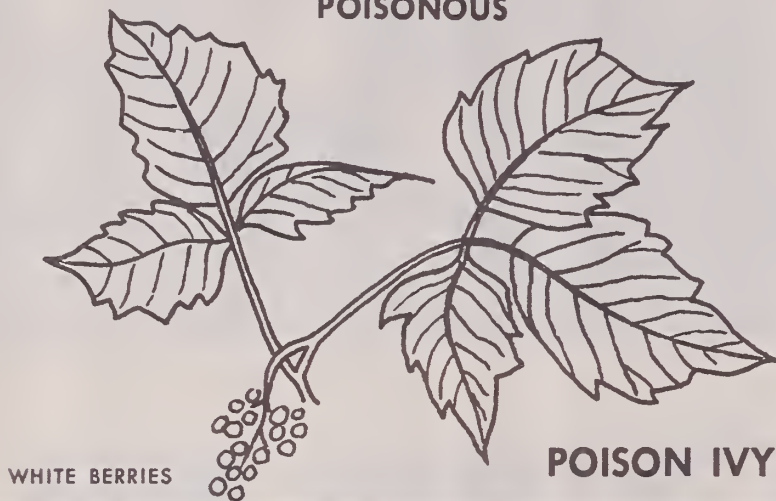
Picture Story No. 185  
July, 1965

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**POISONOUS**



**HARMLESS**

**VIRGINIA  
CREEPER**



## IVY, OAK SKIN POISONING STRIKES MILLIONS ANNUALLY

The season of outdoor fun and relaxation is in full bloom—and so are the poison ivy and poison oak plants which grow in abundance in almost every part of the United States. Each year, these attractive looking vines and shrubs cause nearly 2 million cases of skin poisoning serious enough to require either medical attention or at least one day of restricted activity, or both. It is estimated that skin inflammations caused by plants are responsible annually for 3,730,000 days of restricted activity, half a million days spent in bed, and the loss of 333,000 work days. Although active, roaming youngsters are the most frequent victims, no age group and few individuals are immune.

## IDENTIFY, ERADICATE

Identification and eradication are the keys to poison plant control, says the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Although poison ivy and oak plants grow in a variety of sizes, shapes, and colors, their shiny leaves always occur in groups of three. June and July are the best months to eradicate these plants from backyards, gardens, playgrounds, and other recreation areas. Chemical weed killers (herbicides) offer the easiest and safest method of control. Formulations containing 2,4-D, 2,4,5-T, amitrole or ammonium sulfamate are the most effective. Spraying should be done when there is little or no air movement, preferably in early morning or late afternoon when the air is cool and moist. Plants take several weeks to die and normally two or more applications are needed to completely kill a stand. When using a herbicide spray, follow directions on the label and observe all precautions for safe handling, use, and storage.

More detailed information on poisonous plants and their eradication, as developed by Agriculture Department scientists, can be obtained from your county Extension agent or by requesting single copies of Farmers' Bulletin No. 1972, "Poison Ivy, Poison Oak, and Poison Sumac," from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20401. Price is 15¢.

*Leaflets Three, Let It Be—Common poison ivy leaf forms are shown along with waxy, white berries that usually grow in clusters on slender stems near the axis of the leaves. Virginia creeper is frequently mistaken for poison ivy, but can be distinguished by its five leaflets compared with the three of poison ivy. BN-24756*



*Eradication—A handy chemical aerosol spray is applied to a shrub form of poison ivy. The U. S. Department of Agriculture cautions that spray should be kept away from ornamentals and other desirable plants. Gloves should be worn to prevent poisoning from accidental contact with the plants being sprayed. BN-24754*



*Workers spray a campsite to kill poison ivy sprouts in a grass area at Pennsylvania's Valley Forge State Park prior to a Boy Scout jamboree. The power of poison ivy to cause mass illness or discomfort was illustrated when 18,000 Scouts caught skin poisoning during a jamboree here. Much of the poison ivy was in freshly mown grass. Some victims required hospitalization. BN-25175*



*Poison Ivy Vine—The plant frequently attaches itself to trees, poles, fences, and even the sides of houses. The vines may be sprayed with amitrole without injuring the tree, says the U. S. Department of Agriculture, but better results may be obtained by cutting the vine at the base of the trunk and spraying the regrowth. DN-523*





*Research Continues—Powdered poisonous plant material is extracted at a U. S. Department of Agriculture laboratory as part of the search for more knowledge about poisonous plants that are troublesome to both man and animals. Such research is essential to the development of more effective methods of controlling and eradicating these plants. BN-25176*

*Some photographs are produced here courtesy of University of Illinois College of Agriculture and Amchem Products, Inc.*

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